

Scotland

2019 finish – 5th place.

Scotland come into the competition on the back of a disastrous world cup campaign. Losing to Ireland and the home nation Japan meant failing to qualify from the group stage. Will Scotland turn it around this year and improve on their 5th place finish from 2019.

What's New

Full back Stuart Hogg has taken over as captain from hooker Stuart McNally who does remain in the squad it must be said. In total the squad includes 6 new uncapped players with many Scottish fans looking forward to the debut of Edinburgh number eight Nick Haining. On a negative note, Flyhalf Finn Russell has left the Scottish camp, earlier this week Russell ignored requests to stop drinking at the team hotel and was asked not to train with the squad. He was since invited back to train but declined the request and returned home to his club Racing 92 in France. Russell's absence will no doubt be a huge blow to Scotland's chances in this year's competition.

Player to watch

Hamish Watson

One man to keep an eye out for is Edinburgh's powerful openside flanker Hamish Watson who returns from injury having been forced off in Scotland's opening world cup game against Ireland. Watson offers Scotland some much needed beef upfront to a pack that has often been described as toothless.

Predicted finish

On reviewing Scotland's fixtures, there is certainly no bankers with Italy almost certainly targeting a scalp against Scotland at the Stadio Olimpico. Tough trips to Wales and Ireland also loom large and for these reasons a **5th place** finish is predicted with Italy no doubt feeling they will have something to say about this.